

Amendment under 37 CFR §1.111
Application No. 10/568,393
Attorney Docket No. 062072

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended): Silica-filled rubber granules wherein the granules are comprised of dried granules of a cocoagulation product of rubber and silica having an average particle diameter (D50) of 300~3000 μm and a weight ratio of the granules within the range of $D50 \pm (D50 \times 0.5)$ is at least 50% by weight, and wherein the granules having a sphericity of at least 0.6 determined by a ratio of the major axis (D_L) and the minor axis (D_S) of the granules (D_L/D_S).

Claim 2 (currently amended): Silica-filled rubber granules according to claim 1, wherein a weight ratio of the granules within the range of $D50 \pm (D50 \times 0.5)$ is at least 80% by weight ~~and the particle is approximately spherical.~~

Claim 3 (original): Cross-linked rubber obtained by cross-linking the silica-filled rubber granules according to claim 1 or 2.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): A process for producing silica-filled rubber granules which comprises supplying a cake of a cocoagulation product of silica and rubber having a water

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content of 40~80% by weight to a drier provided with an indirect-heating type container equipped with stirring wing blades, stirring the cake while applying shearing force to the cake with the stirring wing blades, and then drying the cake.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): A process for producing silica-filled rubber granules according to claim 4, wherein the cake is divided and fed to the drier.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): A process for producing silica-filled rubber granules according to claim 4 or 5, wherein the clearance (t) between the stirring wing blades and the wall of the container is adjusted to 2~50 mm.

Claim 7 (new): Silica-filled rubber granules according to claim 1, wherein the sphericity is at least 0.68.